Sale of minor girls of Afghan refugees

2701. SHRIMATI GURCHARAN KAUR: Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are aware of the reports in Washington Times that 5 to 17 year old girls of Afghan refugees are being auctioned off in the frontier areas of Pakistan to serve as prostitutes or live in servitude or join herms of the rich in west Asia;

(b) if so, the details in this regard; and

(c) what steps Government propose to take at diplomatic level including SAARC to stop atrocities on women?

THE MINISTER OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI JASWANT SINGH): (a) to (c) It is well known that Pakistan's self serving policies in Afghanistan for over two decades, which has also included the sponsoring and support to groups such as the Taliban and Al Qaida, have caused untold suffering to the people of Afghanistan. Women and children have been particularly affected, including by the violence over the last two decades.

Government have supported measures being taken in Afghanistan and at the international level to improve the situation of women in Afghanistan.

Discussion with Pak on security environment in South Asian sub-continent

2702. DR. KARAN SINGH: Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether in continuation of the talks between the Union Minister of External Affairs and the Pak Foreign Minister at the SAARC Summit in Kathmandu, the Pak Foreign Minister again discussed the security environment in South Asian sub-continent with the National Security Adviser of India in February first week; and

(b) if so, what precise issues were discussed there and what was the outcome thereof?

THE MINISTER OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI JASWANT SINGH): (a) No, Sir.

(b) Does not arise.

Allegations by Vice Consul Istanbul

2703. SHRI SWARAJ KAUSHAL: Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that Vice Consul in Indian Embassy, Istanbul, Turkey, has leveled serious allegations of corruption and other irregularities;

(b) if so, what is the nature of those allegations;

(c) whether Government have enquired into the said allegations if so, the finding thereof;

(d) whether Government propose to take some action against Vice Consul as well; and

(e) if so, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI JASWANT SINGH): (a) and (b) Yes, Sir. The allegations pertained to financial irregularities against the Consul General.

(c) A preliminary investigation was conducted on the allegations, which were found to be false.

(d) and (e) Government has recalled the Vice Consul for making false allegations, thereby violating the Conduct Rules of Government.